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## The Daily Summary

SOUTH VIETNAM:

**PORTUGAL:** The moderates, led by the Socialist Party, won a resounding victory over the Communists in the national constituent assembly election on Friday. Leaders of the Armed Forces Movement are trying to play down the significance of the election. (Page 1)

### Military Leaders Play Down Result

## Constituent Assembly Election Won by Portuguese Moderates

Portuguese moderates, led by the Socialist Party, won a resounding victory over the Communists in the national constituent assembly election on Friday.

Unofficial results announced Saturday gave the three moderate parties more than 70 percent of the vote: the Socialists received 38 percent, the center-left Popular Democrats 26 percent, and the moderate right-wing Social Democratic Center 8 percent. The Communists and their allies took a total of 20 percent, 13 percent going to the Communist Party.

Over 90 percent of the registered voters turned out, most exercising the right to vote for the first time. The Socialist tally exceeded the party's highest expectations. The party showed remarkable strength in all areas of the country. The Socialists almost matched the Communist vote in industrial towns and in the Alentejo region, where the Communists had worked hard to gain the support of peasants on the large estates of absentee landlords.

The Socialists also polled better than expected in the traditionally conservative and heavily populated north, once a Popular Democratic stronghold.

The Socialists' impressive showing will increase their political influence, even though leaders of the ruling Armed Forces Movement say the election was

nothing more than a "pedagogical exercise." The terms of the constitution to be approved by the constituent assembly are a foregone conclusion, but that body's deliberations could have an impact on the policies of the military government.

The Socialists are assured of over one third of the seats. Altogether, the moderate parties may control as much as 80 percent of the assembly.

### Did Anyone Win Anything?

Party chief Mario Soares, is uncertain about how the Armed Forces Movement will react to the Socialist victory. Soares recognizes, in the aftermath of the election, that Socialist political influence is still dependent on the consent of the Movement. He is trying to make the election result palatable to the Movement by describing it as a victory for "progressive" forces.

In a televised roundtable discussion with the leaders of the four parties in the governing coalition, Soares was conciliatory. He pledged that his party would comply with the pre-electoral pact signed by the six major parties that turned power over to the Movement.

Soares is wooing the Movement in an effort to split it away from the Communists. Up to now, the leaders of the Movement have found the highly dis-

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## Socialists Considering Tactics After Portuguese Election Victory

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ciplined Communists easy to work with; the party never criticizes the Movement's policies. They found the moderate parties were more difficult to handle.

Although press reports indicate that Soares may be interested in forming a common front with the Communists and the Popular Democrats,

Soares intends, instead, to emphasize the Socialists' independence and popular strength, and to build the party's support.

### Movement's Response

Movement leaders are pleased that the election was peaceful and that it boosted Portugal's international image. So far they have played down the moderates' victory and stressed the political naivete of the Portuguese people.

On Saturday, Information Minister Jesuino and Revolutionary Council member Correia held a press conference. Jesuino remarked that the election really did not matter, it "was just an exercise for the elections for a legislative assembly in December."

The Movement had been campaigning

to encourage those uncertain of their political preference to vote a blank ballot, triggering speculation they would use such votes to indicate their own popular support. The percentage of blank or spoiled ballots amounted to a scant 7 percent. Jesuino said the Movement had hoped for 40 percent.

The spokesmen said the Movement did not regard the election as a defeat for their policies or as a protest against high unemployment and inflation. Jesuino, on the contrary, interpreted the vote as a victory for the Movement because the Socialists and the other top vote-getters had previously agreed to the Movement's platform.

According to Jesuino, "the first lesson to be drawn from the results of these elections is that the chosen line toward socialism has been reinforced" and thus there is no reason to modify the government's basic policies.

### Factionalism

The election may hasten the growth of factionalism in the Revolutionary Council. Recent reports indicate that the division between moderate and radical factions that existed before the unsuccessful March 11 coup has become more complex.

How the Movement reacts to the moderate victory will largely depend on which faction comes out on top.

A moderate election victory was feared most by the radical officers. Prime Minister Goncalves may well suffer politically as the result of the vote; he made no secret of his support for the Communist-dominated Portuguese Democratic Movement.

President Costa Gomes is most likely pleased at the outcome, but he and the moderates still probably lack the power to turn the situation to their advantage.

Coutinho, on the other hand, was one of the major proponents of the blank ballot, and is probably disappointed at the failure of the ploy. He may still try to capitalize on his strength among the military and try to form his "civilian Armed Forces Movement," ideologically situated between the Communists and the Socialists.

### Impact on Communists

The Communist Party and the Portuguese Democratic Movement stand to lose the most as a result of the election. Both portray themselves as the representatives of the "people," but the "people" have disagreed. After spending more money than anyone else and using their organization to get their supporters to the polls, they can hardly complain that the people were not aware of their program.

The party will probably not protest the election, but will most likely complain that the "anticommunists" and "antidemocratic forces" sabotaged their campaign.

Communist leader Alvaro Cunhal summed up his party's approach, stating that "we know that the strength of the Communist Party by far exceeds the electoral influence as shown by the election figures, and therefore we believe that the election results in no way harm the Communist Party."

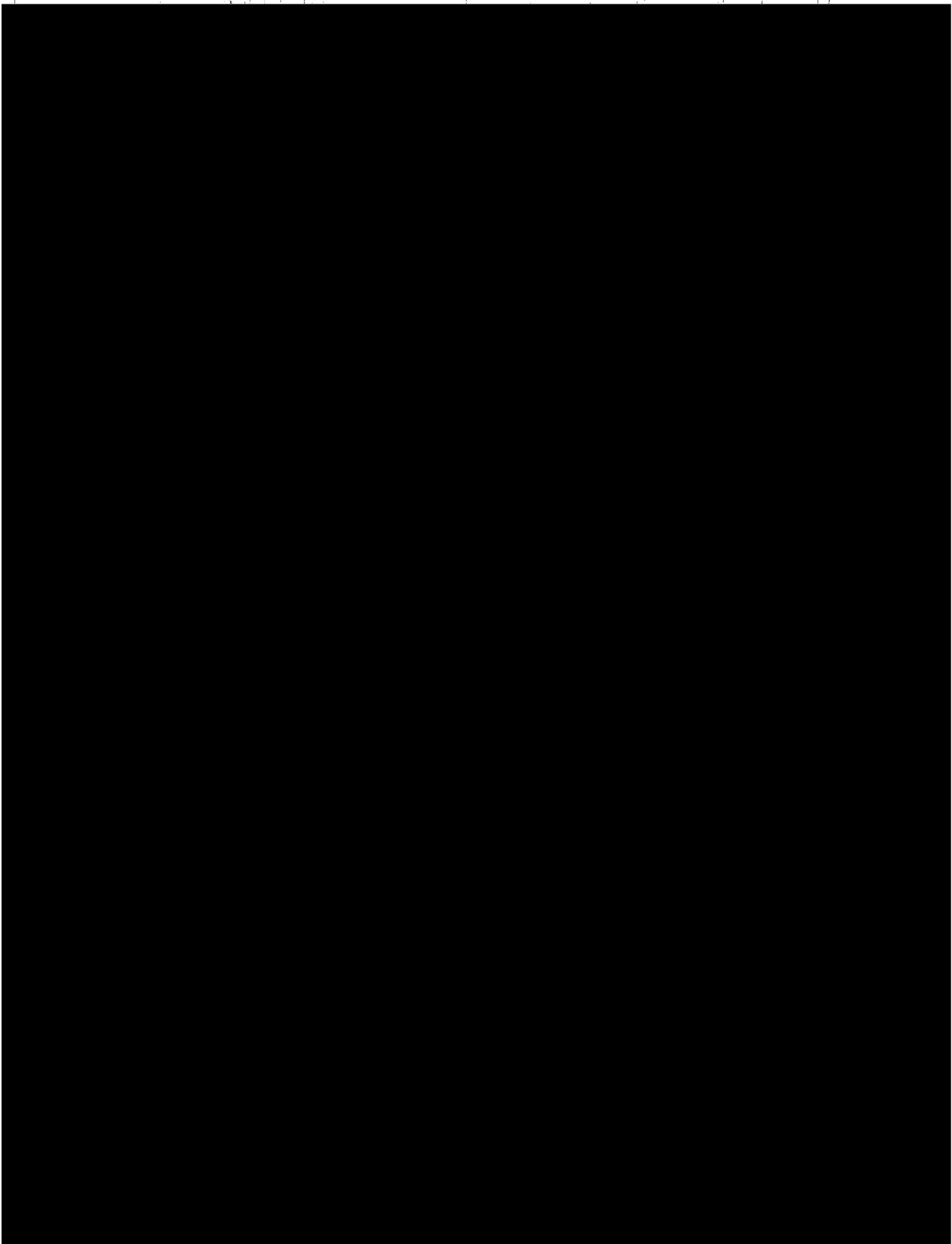
The Communists will encourage the Movement to belittle the election results because their success in the near future depends on their continued ability to influence the leaders of the Movement.

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